The Cleveland Museum of Art

Press Release

For Release: August 27, 1996 Contact: Denise Horstman, ext. 262

ARTISTS AND WOULD-BE ARTISTS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN 7TH ANNUAL CHALK FESTIVAL
Workshops Held Prior to Festival

(Cleveland, OH) -- The Annual Chalk Festival on the historic southern sidewalks of the Cleveland Museum of Art happens on the last weekend in September. For this 7th year of the popular event, the public is invited to chalk their own pictures, watch professional artists at work, and enjoy refreshments and live entertainment on Saturday the 28th from 10 am to 4 pm and Sunday the 29th from 1 to 5 pm. Participants can rent a small square of pavement including a 12-color box of chalk for $5 or pay $10 for a larger square of the plaza and a 24-color box of chalk. Advance reservations are available by calling the museum at 216/421-7340, ext. 483; reservations will be held until 2 pm on Sunday; participants may register on arrival also.

Advance two-part workshops on chalk artistry are geared to all ages and to a range of abilities. They are scheduled for Sundays, September 15th and 22nd, from 3 to 4:30 pm; and Wednesdays, September 18th and 25th, from 7 to 8:30 pm. In the first session (on the first Sunday or first Wednesday), participants will learn to make their own colored chalk using an adaptation of an old world recipe. On the second Sunday or Wednesday, professional street painting tecnhiques are taught for masking, stenciling, blending, and scaling pictures. The two-workshop series costs $15/individual or $35/family; fees include materials and also reserve the chalk and square for the Festival.

Artists working in this year's Festival are Anna Arnold, Bruno Casiano, Catherine Cervas, Dyane Hronek Hanslik, Mark Jenks, Michaelangelo Lovelace, and Jesse Rhinehart. Entertainment will be the Iroko Drum and Dance Society on Saturday, ca. 12-45-2:45, and the funk-rock-blues of Delicate Balance on Sunday, ca. 2:15-3:45, plus these poets from the Cleveland Poetry Cooperative: on Saturday, Nancy Ann Smith at noon and Jim Perkins at 3:00, and on Sunday, performance poet Ray McNiece (of the national champion slam poetry team) at 1:30 and the Drumming Poets at 4:00. In keeping with the Italian Renaissance origins of sidewalk chalk drawing, this year's food and drink will be focaccia bread, Italian cookies, iced mocha, and lemonade. This year, students from Smith

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11150 EAST BOULEVARD, CLEVELAND, OHIO 44106-1797
TEL 216-421-7340 TDD 216-421-0018 FAX 216-421-0411

Elementary School in Berea will be creating a large-scale street painting, based on their training over the past year with artist Julie Longhill.

The Chalk Festival increases in popularity and scale each year. In 1995, about 450 people of all ages participated; 2,000-3,000 strolled and watched the artists and would-be artists produce such images as a giant bowl of cherry tomatoes, signs of the zodiac, and a piece based on Cleveland's Egyptian collection. In light of the blockbuster Monet retrospective then taking place at the Art Institute of Chicago, artist Alan Peters created a portrait of Monet wearing his signature hat—with a Cleveland Indians logo on it—and added the slogan "Monet may be in Chicago, but his heart is in Cleveland."

The Cleveland Museum of Art's Annual Chalk Festival is a modern descendant of the beggars' tradition beginning in 16th-century Italy of copying the religious paintings of Old Masters on the pavements of cathedral plazas—hence earning these amateur artists the name *I Madonnari*, or painters of the Madonna.

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